

OBLIGATION OF WEARING THE NIQĀB

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CONTENTS:

Preface.....	3
Part One: Niqāb according to the Salaf.....	4
Part Two: Covering the face is Wājib according to the 4 Imāms.....	14
Part Three: Niqāb by the Mufassirīn - Tafsīr of Sūrat al-Ahzāb, Āyāh 59.....	32

PREFACE

I have translated the first two articles from Shaykh ‘Abdul ‘Azīz at-Tarīfī’s book on Hijāb word to word, paraphrased a few paragraphs and added a few additional benefits. *The third article is written by Abū Bakr at-Tarābulṣī.*

Share these benefits about the obligation of the Niqāb with all of our striving sisters, it’s full of proof.

- Abū Bakr at-Tarābulṣī. May Allāh hasten his release, preserve him, and accept all the effort he put into writing this.

PART ONE: NIQĀB ACCORDING TO THE SALAF

Asalāmu ‘Alaykum - Niqāb is Wājib & this is the best response I can share refuting those who take the statements of the Salaf out of context.

Translated from Shaykh ‘Abdūl ‘Azīz al-Tarīfī: Detailed Response

Refuting the misconception that the Salaf permitted a woman to show her face. As I have shared in the past, the Jilbāb according to the definition of the Salaf is a garment which covers the whole body, and is used to cover the Face, as it’s reported in Sahīh al-Bukhārī & Sahīh Muslim that ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) said “I veiled my face with my Jilbāb”, and this is what’s known from the sayings of the Sahābah, Tābi’īn & Salaf & there are several authentic narrations that attest to this.

But my main focus today is to speak about the Tafsīr of [Sūrat al-Nūr: Āyāh 31]: Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) said: “And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands’ fathers, their sons, their husbands’ sons, their brothers, their brothers’ sons, their sisters’ sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed.” [24:31]

So Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has mentioned the adornments in this Āyāh, and he divided it into two types:

1. The Hidden Adornments, which by principle is not permissible to be shown, and that’s taken from His statement: {not expose their adornment}, then He followed that up with an exception, of what adornments can be shown to the people mentioned in the verse which I’ll come to soon Inshā’Allāh.
2. The Apparent Adornments, which can be shown to those who Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has specified, and that’s taken from the Āyāh: {and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof...}

However, the misconception I want to remove is those people who use the Tafsīr of the Salaf of this Āyāh {except that which [necessarily] appears thereof...} of what a Muslimah is allowed to show to those Mahrams mentioned in the verse and apply it on the non-Mahram strangers! And Inshā'Allāh I'll prove this very shortly.

So, they will mention several statements of the Salaf of the Āyāh {except that which [necessarily] appears thereof...} where 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) and al-Dahhāk (رحمه الله) said that it's the "Face and Hands". Or that it's narrated from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), Mujāhid (رحمه الله) & Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr (رحمه الله) that it's "Kuhl [eyeshadow], Khidāb [henna on the hand] and the Khātām [ring]." Or that it's "Kuhl [eyeshadow] & Khātām [ring]" as mentioned by Anas Ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه). Or that it's "al-Kuhl [eye-shadow] and Khidāb [henna on the hand]" as mentioned by 'Attā' (رحمه الله). Or that it's "al-Kuhl [eyeshadow]" as mentioned by al-Sha'bī (رحمه الله) & Qatādah (رحمه الله). Or that it's the "Face & Clothes [literally the outer garment]" as it's narrated from al-Hassan al-Basrī (رحمه الله) & Qatādah (رحمه الله). Or that it's "Kuhl [eyeshadow] & Clothes" as it has been reported from al-Sha'bī (رحمه الله). But what I previously mentioned from the Sahābah & Tābi'īn are the most authentic regarding the Tafsīr of the Āyāh.

These narrations from the Salaf can be found here: Refer to Tafsīr 'Abdūl Razzāq (2/56), Musannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah (17281-17300), Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (17/258_261), and Tafsīr Ibn Abī Hātim (8/2574-2575). And the sayings of these pious predecessors is all related to the "Apparent Adornments" for the Mahrams who are related to the Muslimah either by kinship or suckling/nursing, and it's not in any way referring to the non-Mahrams which I'll get to very shortly Inshā'Allāh.

And to prove that their sayings are referring to the Mahrams is through other clear textual evidence from them, and this can be seen through several aspects.

Among them is that all the authentic statements of the Salaf regarding the "Apparent Adornments" in the Tafsīr of this Āyāh: {except that which [necessarily] appears thereof...}, it has been proven on every single one of them that they are clearly referring to Mahrams in specific, or that there's another really strong evidence in another place which proves this, so let's go 1 by 1 Inshā'Allāh in deep detail:

1. As for 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), it's proven that he said: {The Apparent Adornments are: The face, Kuhl [eyeshadow], Khidāb [Henna] on the

hands, and the ring, so this is what she can show in her house whenever someone enters upon her}, then he clearly stated:

{and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire}.

This was collected by Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) in al-Sunan al-Kubrā (7/94) from the chain of 'Alī (رحمه الله) from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه), and it's authentic. Likewise, it was collected by Imām Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (17/259) and Imām Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (17/264,267).

Likewise, 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said about the verse regarding the elderly women: {there is no blame upon them for putting aside their outer garments}: Ibn 'Abbās said: "Al-Jalābīb (i.e., Putting aside the Jilbāb off her face)".

This was narrated by Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) in al-Sunan al-Kubrāh (7/93), Imām Ibn Abī Hātim (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (8/2641), Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (17/360), and it was also collected by Abū 'Ubayd (رحمه الله) in Fadā'il al-Qur'ān (page 307).

It's also authentically proven from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that he said in his Tafsīr of [33:59] {Allāh has ordered the believing women that whenever they leave their houses for a need, to cover their faces from above their heads with their garments [Jalābīb], and to leave open 1 eye}.

This was narrated by Imām Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (19/181), Imām Ibn Abī Hātim (رحمه الله) in al-Durar al-Manthūr (12/141) from the chain of 'Alī Ibn Abī Talhah (رحمه الله) from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه). And the book of 'Alī Ibn Abī Talhah (رحمه الله) that he would use to narrate from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) was strengthened & authenticated to be used as proof by Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (رحمه الله), Imām al-Bukhārī (رحمه الله) & Imām Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī (رحمه الله), refer to Fath al-Bārī (8/438-439) by Al-Hāfidh Ibn Hajr al-'Asqalānī (رحمه الله). This is a strong chain of narration & 'Alī Ibn Abī Talhah (رحمه الله) would always narrate from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) through an intermediary such as Mujāhid Ibn Jabar (رحمه الله), Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr (رحمه الله) & 'Ikrimah (رحمه الله).

It's also narrated from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) that he said, "She wraps the Jilbāb around her face."

This was narrated by Imām al-Shāfi'ī (رحمه الله) in his Musnad (1/303 number 788), and in al-Umm (3/370-371), and Imām Abū Dāwūd (رحمه الله) in Masā'il al-Imām Ahmad (732).

So this is an explicit proof that 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) is of the view that covering the face is compulsory, and what he meant in the Tafsīr of Sūrat al-Nūr by "The face & hands" was the Mahrams of the Muslimah, not the strangers, and likewise the companions & students of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) have similar narrated statements to that of 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), and they did not ask him about the non-Mahrams, it's not narrated at all, from its absolute clarity, and they were extremely modest, so many of those today who are used to seeing Tabarrūj will not understand the statements of the Salaf, because even in our times, we have women who go out dressed more immodestly to strangers than the women of the Salaf used to dress in front of their Mahrams!

2. As for Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr (رحمه الله), it's authentically proven on him that the exception Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has given for the elderly women in the Āyāh, is to put aside the Jilbāb, and as we already know, the Jilbāb is what's used to cover the face according to the Salaf.

So Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr (رحمه الله) said: {She does not openly display adornments by putting aside her outer garment, so that her adornments can be seen from her} This was narrated by Imām ibn Abī Hātim in his Tafsīr (8/2642).

3. As for 'Attā' Ibn Abī Rabāh (رحمه الله), it's authentically proven on him that he preferred a Muslimah to cover her hair in the presence of her Mahrams, so he was asked about a man whether he can see a woman's head that's forbidden for him to marry: So 'Attā' Ibn Abī Rabāh (رحمه الله) said: {Covering it is more beloved to me, and if they saw it, there's no problem}.

This was narrated by Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) in his Musannāf (17566) from the chain of 'Abdūl Mālik (رحمه الله) from 'Attā' (رحمه الله) and it's authentic. And it's also authentically proven that 'Attā' (رحمه الله) mentioned the same thing as Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr (رحمه الله) regarding the elderly women and that the Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has given an exception to the elderly women, which is to {put aside her Jilbāb}, and as we know the Jilbāb is what's upon the face.

4. As for Mujāhid Ibn Jabar (رحمه الله), it's authentically proven from him that he doesn't permit a Muslimah to put aside her veil in the presence of a disbelieving woman, so how can we hold his statements regarding the "Apparent Adornments"

{The ring, henna on the hand, and eye-shadow} and apply it to the non-Mahram men from the Muslims & Mushriks?!

Layth (رحمه الله) has narrated from Mujāhid (رحمه الله) that he said: {A Muslimah cannot take off her veil in the presence of a Mushrikāh [polytheist women], and she isn't allowed to greet her, because Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) said: "Or their women (muslimāhs)", and they [Mushrikāh's] are not from among our women}.

This was narrated by Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) in al-Sunan al-Kubrāh (7/95), and Sa'īd Ibn Mansūr in his Sunan (al-Tafsīr/1576). And the narration of Layth (رحمه الله) from Mujāhid is a documented book & transcript, this was mentioned by Imām Ibn Hibbān (رحمه الله), refer to al-Thiqāt (7/331) and it's authentic.

It's also authentically proven from Mujāhid Ibn Jabar (رحمه الله) that the exception Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has given the elderly women is {to put aside her Jilbāb}, i.e. To uncover her face & has stated the same thing as 'Attā' (رحمه الله), Sā'īd Ibn Jubayr (رحمه الله), Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) and all of the Salaf have agreed to this.

Refer to Tafsīr al-Tabarī (17/361,363-364) and it's in Tafsīr Mujāhid (2/444), also refer to Sunan Sa'īd ibn Mansūr (al-Tafsīr/1617).

5. & 6. As for the saying of 'Āmir al-Sha'bi (رحمه الله): {eye-shadow and clothes}, and the saying of "Ikrimah (رحمه الله) the companion of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما): {The face, and the collarbone (of the neck)}, it's also authentically proven from them that he used to prohibit a Muslimah to put aside her veil in the presence of her Uncles [on both the father & mother's side], as opposed to the majority of the scholars who permitted it, so how can anyone hold their Tafsīr regarding: {and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof...} and then say they permit a Muslimah to show her face, neck, kuhl to the non-Mahram strangers, while they are extremely strict & prohibit showing the face, neck & eye-shadow to the Mahrams that aren't mentioned in the Āyāh?

Dāwud (رحمه الله) has narrated from al-Sha'bi (رحمه الله) & 'Ikrimah (رحمه الله) regarding the verse: {and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons...} all the way till he completed the verse:

They (al-Sha'bī & 'Ikrimah) said: {He did not mention the uncles [on the father & mother's side] because they belong to their sons, and they (al-Sha'bī & 'Ikrimah) said: She cannot put aside her veil in the presence of her uncles}

This is narrated by Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) in his Musannāf (17580), and from his chain of narration, it was narrated by Imām ibn Mundhir (رحمه الله) as it's present in Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (10/220), and it was narrated by ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (10/220).

And this is supported by another narration which is narrated by Jābir (رحمه الله) from 'Āmir al-Sha'bī (رحمه الله) that he disliked it if all Mahrams would see the hair of a Muslimah.

This is narrated by Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) in al-Musannāf (17569), so it shows that al-Sha'bī (رحمه الله) was very strict on having some Mahrams see her hair. And it's also authentically proven from al-Sha'bī (رحمه الله) the exact same thing as what has been proven on 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr (رحمه الله), Mujāhid (رحمه الله), 'Attā' (رحمه الله) & others, that the exception Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) gave the elderly women in the Āyāh of Sūrat al-Nūr, is putting aside the Jilbāb. This is narrated by Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (17/363).

7. As for al-Hasan al-Basrī (رحمه الله), then it's authentic from him that he doesn't allow a brother to see his sister without a head covering, so it's authentic from the chain of Hishām (رحمه الله) from al-Hasan al-Basrī (رحمه الله) regarding the woman, can she put aside her head-covering in the presence of her brother? He replied: "Wallāhi she isn't supposed to do that."

This was narrated by Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) in al-Musannāf (17568) and it's authentic, and this is proof that al-Hasan al-Basrī (رحمه الله) was referring to the Mahrams in his Tafsīr of Sūrat al-Nūr when he said: {The face & the clothes}, and the Salaf wouldn't ask about the non-Mahrams from their Immense Taqwā [righteousness & god-consciousness].

And it's authentically proven from al-Hasan al-Basrī (رحمه الله) the same as what 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr (رحمه الله), 'Attā' (رحمه الله), Mujāhid (رحمه الله), al-Sha'bī (رحمه الله) & others regarding the exception Allāh (جل وعلا) has given to the elderly women in the Āyāh pertains to putting aside the Jilbāb. This was narrated by Imām 'Abdūl-Razzāq (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (2/63) and Imām Ibn Abī Hātim (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (8/2641-2642).

8. As for al-Dahāk (رحمه الله), to prove that he's speaking about the Mahrams, is what Muzāhim (رحمه الله) authentically narrated from him, that he said: {If I entered upon my mother, I would say to her: Cover your Head}. This was narrated by Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) in his Musannāf (17574 & 17576).

9. As for Qatādah (رحمه الله), the same thing has been authentically proven on him like the others regarding the exception Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) gave the elderly women. It was collected by Imām Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (8/2640). So, this shows that there's no difference of opinion amongst the Sahābah, Tābi'īn & Salaf that the verse of Sūrat al-Nūr is referring to the Mahārim.

10. It's authentically proven from Abī Sālih (رحمه الله) & 'Ikrimah (رحمه الله) that they said: {The Apparent Adornments is what's above al-Dir' (chest, torso)} This is narrated by Imām ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) in his Musannāf (3/383). And الدرع is the clothes of the house, not the clothes when you go out as it's well known, because al-Dir' reveals with it the hair & neck, and it's prohibited to reveal this to the strangers by Ijmā'.

11. It's also authentically proven from Imām Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī (رحمه الله) that the Apparent Adornments is al-Dir'. This is narrated by Imām Ibn Abī Hātim (10/109), and al-Tahāwī (رحمه الله) in Sharh Ma'ānī al-Āthār (4/332) with an authentic chain.

12. It's authentically proven from Tāwūs (رحمه الله) that: {there was nothing more disliked to him other than a Mahram seeing the 'Awrah of the other}, he said: {He used to dislike for her (Muslimah) to take off her head-covering in his presence (Mahram)}. This was narrated by 'Abdūl-Razzāq (رحمه الله) in al-Musannāf (12831) from the chain of Ma'mar (رحمه الله) from Ibn Tāwūs (رحمه الله) from his father (Tāwūs) and it's authentic.

13. As for 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما), he also mentioned that Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has given an exception for the elderly women to put aside her Jilbāb. Imām Ibn Abī Hātim (رحمه الله) narrated it in his Tafsīr (8/2641) and it was collected by Sa'īd ibn Mansūr in his Sunan (al-Tafsīr/1616).

So, from this Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) has placed a chapter-heading in his Sunan from Ibn 'Abbās's Tafsīr of the verse: {and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof...}, so he said: {Chapter: What a woman can show from her adornments to those mentioned in the verse from among her Mahram}:

Then he mentioned the statement of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) which says: {The Apparent Adornments are: The face, eyeshadow, henna on the hand, and the ring, so this is what she can reveal in her house to those who enter upon her}

This was narrated by Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) in al-Sunan al-Kubra (7/94), Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (17/259) and Ibn Abī Hātim (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (8/2576) as it was referenced before, so refer back to it & the chain is authentic according to Imām al-Bukhārī (رحمه الله), Imām Ahmad (رحمه الله) & Imām Abū Hātim al-Rāzī (رحمه الله) as it comes through the chain of 'Alī ibn Abī Talhah (رحمه الله) from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما).

Likewise, Imām Ibn 'Abdīl Barr (رحمه الله) has mentioned that showing the adornments are for the Mahrams, not the strangers, so he said: {Indeed, the Mahrams that are related through kinship or suckling are not to be concealed from, nor to be covered up in front of except for the 'Awrāt, and the woman is a 'Awrah (to the Mahrams) except for her face & hands}. Refer to al-Tamhīd (8/236).

14. It's authentic from 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) that he said: {The Apparent Adornments are: the clothes}.

This was narrated by Imām 'Abdūl Razzāq (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (2/56), Sa'īd Ibn Mansūr in his Sunan (al-Tafsīr/1569), Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) in his Musannāf (17282 & 17296), Imām Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (17/256-257), Imām Ibn Abī Hātim (رحمه الله) in his Tafsīr (8/2573-2574) & others.

Likewise, this is what all his companions from 'Irāq have said such as Imām Abī al-Ahwas (رحمه الله), Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī (رحمه الله), al-Hasan (رحمه الله), Ibn Sīrīn (رحمه الله) & others, and Mujāhid (رحمه الله) said the same thing. Refer to Sunan Sa'īd Ibn Mansūr (1571), Musannāf Ibn Abī Shaybah (17285, 17289, 17293), Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr (17/257) & the statement of Mujāhid can be found in Tafsīr Ibn Abī Hātim (8/2574).

And what is meant by al-Thiyāb or "The clothes" is what's beneath the Jilbāb, so it's the clothes that are worn traditionally in the house, and the Jilbāb simply covers it up, but the clothes she wears beneath the Jilbāb, it's permissible for the Mahrams to see that, because "Adornments" can be explained as being "clothes" as Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) said: {Take your adornments at every Masjid} [Sūrat al-A'rāf:31] i.e. The adornments of your clothes, and this is what Imām Abū Ishāq al-Sabī'ī (رحمه الله) used to explain the statement of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), so he recited that verse when he narrated the Tafsīr of Ibn Mas'ūd from the chain of Abī al-Ahwas (رحمه الله) from Ibn Mas'ūd (رحمه الله) & it's authentic.

Refer to Tafsīr 'Abdūl Razzāq (2/56) and Tafsīr ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (17/257).

15. It's also authentic from Imām al-Zuhrī (رحمه الله) that he said: {There's nothing wrong for the man to look at the front hairs of a woman from beneath the veil, if he was a Mahram, but as for her taking off the complete veil in front of him, then she shouldn't}.

This was narrated by Imām 'Abdūl Razzāq (رحمه الله) in his Musannāf (12829). Likewise, Imām ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (رحمه الله) said regarding whether a woman can take off her veil in front of a Mahram: {As for him seeing a little bit [of her hair] from beneath the veil, that's fine, but for her to take off her veil completely, then No}.

This was narrated by Imām 'Abdūl Razzāq (رحمه الله) in his Musannāf (12830) from the chain of Ma'mar (رحمه الله) from al-Zuhrī (رحمه الله) and it's authentic.

So all these authentic narrations from the Salaf show you how pious they were in their modesty & how much chastity they had, and it's also very important to mention that the Tafsīr of the Sahābah regarding the "Apparent Adornments" where they mention that it's the Face, this doesn't mean that they prohibit a woman to show her hair to those Mahrams, but rather it's from the amount of modesty that they had, which is why you'll find many statements of the Salaf saying they ask their mother to cover her head before they would enter upon her, but what the scholars such as Shaykh Sulaymān Ibn Nāsir al-'Alwān (حفظه الله), Shaykh 'Abdūl 'Azīz al-Turayfī (حفظه الله), Shaykh Nāsir al-Fahad (حفظه الله) & Shaykh 'Alī al-Khudayr (حفظه الله) would say is that the Sharī'ah is taken a bit more lightly in these areas, so what we believe is that a Muslimah can show her hair to her Mahram, but the point of relating all these narrations from the Salaf is to place their statements in the right spot, not apply them in the wrong topic.

16. I would like to finish this with an amazing narration from Hafsa bint Sīrīn (رضي الله عنها) which was narrated by 'Āsim al-Ahwal who said: {We entered upon Hafsa bint Sīrīn, and she put the Jilbāb on like this (explaining what she did) and covered her face with it (the Arabic text mentions Niqāb), so we said to her: "May Allāh have mercy upon you! Allāh (جل وعلا) said: "And women of post-menstrual age who have no desire for marriage - there is no blame upon them for putting aside their outer garments [but] not displaying adornment." [24:60] (and it's the Jilbāb), so he said: She said to us: "What is after that?" So we recited: "But to modestly refrain [from that] is better for them." [24:60], so she said: It is to keep the Jilbāb on}.

This was narrated by Sa'īd ibn Mansūr (رحمه الله) in his Sunan (al-Tafsīr/1618), and Sa'dān Ibn Nasr (رحمه الله) in his "Juz" (page 60) and from the chain of Sa'dān

(رحمه الله), Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) has collected it in his Sunan al-Kubrā (7/93) and it's authentic.

So here we have an explicit evidence from Hafsā bint Sīrīn (رضي الله عنها) regarding the Āyah that Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has given an exception for the elderly women to take the Jilbāb off the face as long as it's not beautified, "But to modestly refrain [from that] is better for them" as Hafsā bint Sīrīn (رضي الله عنها) mentioned, and the Hadīth explicitly describes her as wearing the Niqāb.

And all the Salaf agree that the exception given in this verse is to take the Jilbāb off the face, so how can those people apply the statements of the Salaf where they can show the Face & hands to the Mahrams and apply it to the non-Mahrams?! If a Muslimah was really allowed to show her face & hands to the non-Mahram men, then what is the purpose behind this Āyāh where Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has given an exception for the old women to show her face, and this exception is exclusive for them, so this proves that the younger women are obliged to cover the face from the Strangers among the Men, and Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) knows best.

PART TWO: COVERING THE FACE IS WĀJIB ACCORDING TO THE 4 IMĀMS

This part proves that Niqāb is Wājib through the sayings of the 4 Great Imāms & refuting the misconception that the 4 Imāms permitted a woman to show her face & hands to non-Mahram men, but rather this is the opinion from some later Imāms who came after them where differences of opinion occurred, and I'll provide the evidence from the statements of the Imāms & their followers proving that Niqāb is compulsory, if Allāh wills.

Translated from Shaykh 'Abdūl 'Azīz al-Tarīfī: Detailed Response.

Before we go into the sayings of the Madhāhib in detail, I would like to state that the Scholars have divided 'Awrah into the following categories, 'Awrat al-Nadhr, 'Awrat al-Satr & 'Awrat al-Salāh & we'll go through each type Inshā'Allāh at its right time, but here's a short summary, so that you are exposed to the terms.

1. 'Awrat al-Satr (عورة الستر) is related to the 'Awrah in & of itself, so meaning it's what must be covered in its essence(ذات). Such as the chest, neck, hair, legs & this 'Awrah must be covered in & of itself. So, you will see the Majority of the Scholars saying, "The woman is a 'Awrah except her face & hands" and another group of scholars say "All of a woman is 'Awrah", so this is related to 'Awrat al-Satr.
2. 'Awrat al-Salāh (عورة الصلاة) is specifically related to the 'Awrah that must be covered during Salāh. So, the Majority of the Scholars say, "All of a woman is 'Awrah except her face & hands", others say "All of a woman is 'Awrah except her face, hands & feet" & others say, "All of a woman is 'Awrah except her face."
3. 'Awrat al-Nadhr (عورة النظر) is related to it being an 'Awrah in the presence of non-Mahram men, even if it was not a 'Awrah in & of itself. So, the scholars would say "It's not permissible for a man to look at her face & hands" or "It's not permissible to look at anything from her, including her face & hands."

So that's a short summary regarding the terminology used by the Scholars when they refer to 'Awrah, and those who do not differentiate between them will apply the statements of the 4 Imāms in its wrong place, and there's a consensus made by all scholars that the 'Awrah of a slave woman is not the same as a free woman, but

unfortunately you will often see those who apply narrations that are in specific to the slave women & apply them to free women, or they will apply the narrations related to the elderly women & apply it to the young women, or they will not differentiate between ‘Awrat al-Salāh & ‘Awrat al-Nadhr or they’ll apply rulings related to Hajj to permit a woman to show her face, whereas a consensus has been mentioned by Imām Ibn ‘Abdūl Barr & Ibn Qudāmah said he doesn’t know any difference of opinion that a woman is to cover her face with her garment at Hajj in the presence of men. And I have shown in the past that the prohibition of Niqāb in Hajj doesn’t mean that it’s permissible for her to reveal her face in the presence of a man, as she is still a ‘Awrah, and the state of Ihrām doesn’t change that, just as a man is prohibited to wear underpants, it doesn’t mean he can show his private parts.

So, before I go into detail regarding the statements of the Imāms, I would like to mention some necessary situations where a woman needs to be looked at, such as the one wanting to marry her, the Judge who is ruling upon the disputers, a testimony to safeguard the rights in transactions, or a dispute between two parties so that the rights are preserved & she doesn’t imitate another woman.

So in those situations, the Fuqahā’ would mention the term ‘Awrat al-Nadhr, not ‘Awrat al-Satr, so they will say in the rulings related to contracts, testimonies & disputes, {It’s permissible to look at her face & hands}, and perhaps some of them mention {Her face & hands can be looked at, because they are not ‘Awrah} or they’ll say {It’s not obligatory to cover them (the face & hands)}, and their statements are referring to ‘Awrat al-Nadhr, whereas many people interpret this as referring to ‘Awrat al-Satr, which is wrong.

So that’s why you will find the Imāms themselves when they are speaking about the issue of: {Showing the Face in the presence of Strangers} & the issue of {Looking at a woman without a necessary reason}, they say it’s OBLIGATORY for a woman to cover her face.

Some examples of this from the Hanafiyyāh is: What is affirmed among the Hanafī’s, as Imām Abū Ja’far al-Tahāwī (رحمه الله) stated when he was talking about ‘Awrat al-Satr in “Sharh Ma’ānī al-Āthār”, he said: {It is permitted for the people to look at that which is not prohibited for them to look at from the women, (such as) at their faces & hands}. Refer to Sharh Ma’ānī al-Āthār (4/332).

And when the context is regarding ‘Awrat al-Nadhr among the Hanafī’s, then they affirm a specific ruling that relates to the woman and what surrounds her, the Muftī of the Hanafī’s in Dimashq ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Haskafī (رحمه الله) said in “al-Dur

al-Mukhtār”: {The young woman is prohibited from showing her face in the surrounding of men}. Refer to al-Dur al-Mukhtār (1/438).

And Imām Abū Ja’far al-Tahāwī al-Hanafī (رحمه الله) said in his Hāshiyah: {And the prohibition of a young woman from showing her face is in fear of fitnah, not because it is a ‘Awrah}. Refer to “Hāshiyat al-Tahāwī ‘ala Marāqī al-Falāh” (page 241).

Some examples from the Shāfi’iyyāh are: What Imām al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) has mentioned throughout his “Majmū” when he was speaking about ‘Awrat al-Satr, he gave an exception to the Face & Hands. Refer to al-Majmū’ (3/174).

Imām al-Ramlī (رحمه الله) said in “Nihāyat al-Muhtāj”: {And among those who has given exception to the face & hands is the author, al-Nawawī in his “Majmū”, however he has obligated it upon the free woman, and the obligation of covering it in this world is not because it’s a ‘Awrah in & of itself, rather it’s because of her being looked at [from men] which causes fitnah most of the time} Refer to Nihāyat al-Muhtāj (2/457).

And Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) said in “Ma’rifat al-Sunan wal-Āthār” when he mentioned the statement of Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) regarding the permissibility of looking at the face & hands of the engaged woman, because they are not ‘Awrah, Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) said:

{As for looking, without a valid reason, for a non-Mahram, then its prohibition is affirmed by the verses of the Hijāb, and it's not permissible for them to show their adornments except to those mentioned in the Āyāh from among the Mahrams}. Refer to “Marifat al-Sunan wal-Āthār” (10/23).

And from this, Imām al-Subkī (رحمه الله) said: {What's closest to the view of our companions [i.e., Shāfi’ī Madhab]: Is that the Face & Hands is a ‘Awrah in al-Nadhr [of being looked at from non-Mahram men], not in Salāh}. This has been quoted from him by Imām al-Khatīb al-Shirbīnī (رحمه الله) in “Mughnī al-Muhtāj” (4/209).

Likewise, among the Mālikiyyāh: So for the same reason, the Madhab of Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) prohibits a woman to show her face in the presence of men who can see her on the road, and the Madhab of Mālik (رحمه الله) permits showing the face when there is no onlooker around, because he differentiates between ‘Awrat al-Satr & ‘Awrat al-Nadhr.

Imām Ibn Qattān (رحمه الله) said: {And what most likely appears to me is to say: The Madhab of Mālik is that it's not permissible for a man to look at a non-Mahram woman except in necessity...and the permissibility of displaying [the face], and its prohibition [of displayment] is of different levels according to him - i.e.: Mālik - upon the permissibility of looking, or its prohibition, so in every situation that he has permitted looking, there's a concession for displaying [the face]. Refer to "Al-Nadhr Fī Ahkām al-Nadhr" (page 50-51).

So, preventing her from showing her face doesn't necessitate that the Face & Hands are 'Awrah, and the face & hands not being an 'Awrah doesn't necessitate the permissibility of showing them.

And what occurs most of the time is taking the sayings of the 4 Juristic Imāms of the Madhabs out of context, so they hold their statements regarding 'Awrat al-Satr [The 'Awrah which must be covered in & of itself], and they apply it to 'Awrat al-Nadhr [The 'Awrah which must be covered in the presence of non-Mahram men], so they use that as proof to allow a woman to travel immodestly! And the reason for that is either ignorance or desire.

There are 2 confusions some people have:

- Some writers get confused in gathering between the statement of some Fuqahā': {And it's permissible for him to look at her face & hands} and between the statement: {It's compulsory to cover her face & hands} so they view that the permissibility of "looking" [at her face & hands] to mean that it's necessary to show the face & hands, just as they consider "covering up" as a necessity for "not looking".
- Some of them get confused regarding the command of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) to lower the gaze, to mean that showing the face is a must, because how can Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) command lowering the gaze, except if there was something there to see?!

And this misconception is like the previous one, and it's mostly mentioned by those who do not differentiate between 'Awrat al-Satr & 'Awrat al-Nadhr, and to clarify these misconceptions, it could be said: That there are two rulings in the Sharī'ah:

1. Relating to the woman that's being looked at: So a woman can show her face when there's a concession for her to do so, such as the slave woman,

the very old woman, in the Judge's presence for a testimony or when there's a dispute if her identity was questionable, and engagement, and also showing her face to the disbelieving women, and a free woman might also show her face in opposition to the Shar'ī command, because not everyone follows the command, so the ruling of the woman belongs to her, and the ruling of the man belongs to him, so whoever is lax upon doing something, it doesn't necessitate removing the original ruling upon someone else, such as the one who leaves his wealth, like gold & silver on the road, this doesn't permit stealing it, so it's incumbent upon him to protect his wealth, and it's incumbent upon others not to steal, even if the wealth was abandoned.

2. Relating to the onlooking man: So he is commanded to lower his gaze, by what relates to him as being a male onlooker, and whenever he is allured by a slave woman, or a very old woman, it's Harām for him to look at her, even though it's permissible in their own rights to show the face, likewise with looking at the fiancé, and at the times of testimonies & preserving the rights, only the face & hands would be looked at, so it's not permissible to exceed beyond that to the hair or neck in any case whatsoever.

And the slave women used to go out on the streets much more than the free women, and this is why you see a lot of reference to: The issue of looking at a woman; Always permitted in the case of a slave woman, and sometimes permitted in the case of a free woman, doesn't mean that it's permissible to look at her in every circumstance, and when the situation changed, wherein the free women would go out to the streets like the slave women, the rulings got mixed up, and the people found it troublesome to apply it to their current situation.

That is why; The Fuqahā' command a woman to cover her face, even though the majority of the Scholars didn't say it was a 'Awrah [in & of itself], because she is not able to tell who is going to look at her & their level of temptation from her, because the onlookers are many, and she is one person, and not all the people lower their gaze, however if we assume that a woman is not seen except by 1 non-Mahram man who is not allured by her, such as the old man, or the person who doesn't have desires [for women] such as al-'inīn [impotent men, no desire for women], it's permissible to show her face, and it's forbidden to show her hair, because the Face is a 'Awrah in Nadhr, and the reason [behind covering the face in this situation] is removed, and the hair is 'Awrah of Satr, it has no relation to fitnah, rather the mere sight of her hair is harām to be looked at.

The sayings of the 4 Imāms regarding showing the face for a woman:

Imām Mālik (رحمه الله), Imām Abū Hanīfah (رحمه الله) and Imām al-Shāfi'ī (رحمه الله) did not speak about the issue of “Showing a woman's face” in & of itself, and this is not known from their books, nor in the issues of their close companions among them, but they rather spoke about the issue of the face & hands of a woman in relation to other matters that include acts of worship or dealings with people, such as Salāh, Hajj, Contracts, Engagements, and that is because the matter according to them is very clear, that by Principle, regarding the free women is covering up and chastity and covering the face, and their statements were in all the exempted chapters from this sole principle.

Imām Muhammad Ibn 'Alī al-Marwazī al-Shāfi'ī (رحمه الله) said in his Tafsīr: {And the Salaf such as Mālik, al-Shāfi'ī, Abī Hanīfah & others didn't speak except in relation to the 'Awrah of Salāh}, then he said: {And I do not think that any of them permit a young woman to show her face without a necessary need, nor do they permit the young man to look at her without a necessary need}. Refer to “Taysīr al-Bayān, li-Ahkām al-Qur'ān” (2/1001).

So it's extremely important to know the context in which the Imāms speak, when Imām al-Shāfi'ī (رحمه الله) said “A woman is 'Awrah except for her face & hands”, he was referring to Salāh, but what's amazing among those who use this as a justification to show the face when they go out, is that these women also show their feet, whereas Imām al-Shāfi'ī & the majority of the Scholars prohibit showing the feet in Salāh, let alone when you go outside the house!

Likewise, those who take Imām Abū Hanīfah's statement regarding Salāh “A woman is a 'Awrah except for her face, hands & feet”, these people applied his statement out of context and used it as a justification to go out revealing the face, hands & feet. Several scholars from the Fuqahā' of the 4 Madhabs have mentioned: That if a woman was within the Salāh, and there were non-Mahram men in her presence, that she must cover her face.

This was mentioned by Imām al-Khatīb al-Shirbīnī (رحمه الله) from the Shāfi'iyyāh, and he said: {Except that she is in a place where there are strange men who aren't permitted to look at her, so it's not permissible for her to lift off the Niqāb}. This was also mentioned by Imām al-Lakhmī (رحمه الله) from the Mālikiyyāh, and among the Hanābilah it was mentioned by Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) & others, and Imām al-Tahtāwī (رحمه الله) & others from the Hanafiyyāh have alluded towards it. Refer to “al-Iqnā', fī hal al-Alfādhi Abī Shujā” (1/285) and refer to “I'ānat al-Tālibīn” (1/135).

And some writers have even attributed to Imām Ahmad (رحمه الله) a narration: That showing the face is permissible, because of a narration from him that the face of a woman is not ‘Awrah, it was mentioned by Imām Ibn Qudāmah (رحم الله), and also by Imām al-Mardāwī (رحمه الله) in “Al-Insāf” regarding the ‘Awrah of Salāh, and no one who knows the Fiqh of Imām Ahmad or others, and their terminology and differentiation between the different issues & types of ‘Awrah would even state this.

And among that: What is famously attributed towards Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) & Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله): That the woman is a ‘Awrah except her face & hands, whereas the statement of Mālik in “al-Mudawwānah” and al-Shāfi’ī in “al-Umm” is regarding the chapters of Salāh, and they both state: {And showing her feet is a ‘Awrah}. Refer to “al-Mudawwānah” (1/185) and al-Umm” (2/201). So, these people take out what is permissible to be shown from the ‘Awrah of Salāh and apply it to other than Salāh.

As for the issue of contracts, testimonies, engagements, and necessary moments where a woman needs to be looked at:

The 3 Imāms, Mālik, Abū Hanīfah & al-Shāfi’ī consider the face & hands to be a ‘Awrah of Nadhr [i.e., It’s an ‘Awrah in the presence of Men] so they view that she must cover her face & hands because of this reason. And Imām Ahmad (رحمه الله) & a group of scholars view the Face & Hands as a ‘Awrah of Satr [i.e., It’s a ‘Awrah in & within itself], just like the hair & neck of the young & elderly woman, and some people think when they read these words:

That the majority of the scholars permit showing the face, and Ahmad is alone in preventing her from doing so, and this is wrong, rather they are in agreement regarding the obligation of covering the face, however they differ regarding the reason & wisdom behind why she covers the face, is it because it’s a ‘Awrah which must be covered in & of itself, or is it because of the fitnah of the onlookers, so it must be covered because of the external factor?

They agree over the main principle which is covering the face, and they all give concession for the Judge to look at the woman's face for a testimony if her disputer denounced her identity, or when there's no protection for the rights except by knowing her, or when a man wants to marry her, or a man dealing with a slave woman in transactions, in fear of leaving the rights of the people.

So the Imāms mention the permissibility of looking at her face in these situations and what's similar to it, and the Majority of the Scholars mention the reason for

that by their statement: {Because the Face & Hands are not ‘Awrah}, so these people hold their statements to say her face is not a ‘Awrat in the presence of men, whereas the Imāms intend: That it’s permissible because the face is not a ‘Awrah which must be covered in & of itself, but rather it's a ‘Awrah in the presence of men where there’s no necessary need, whereas in this situation the necessary need has been lifted regarding others to look at her, so it becomes permissible, because a necessary need doesn’t permit showing the hair or neck in any case whatsoever, because they are ‘Awrahs which must be covered in & of itself, not because of the fitnah of the onlookers, so it’s not permissible to show that, not even if she's an elderly woman, nor any woman even if she was ugly or physically unwell.

And upon this, Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) held the statement of Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) in the Tafsīr of Allāh’s saying: {Except that which appears thereof} [Sūrat al-Nūr:31], “The face & Hands”, so Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) mentioned the words of al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) upon looking at a woman for engagement.

Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) said: {It’s allowed to look at her face & hands, and it’s not allowed to look at what’s beyond that} then Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) said commenting upon & explicitly clarifying the saying of Al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله): {And that is because Allāh (جل ثناؤه) says: “and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof” [al-Nūr:31], it’s narrated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) and others: It’s the face & hands...But as for looking at her, without a valid/permissible reason, for a non-Mahram, then it’s prohibition is established in the verse of the Hijāb, and it's not permissible for them to show their adornments except to those mentioned in the verse from among her Mahrams}.

Refer to “Ma’rifat al-Sunan wal-Āthār” by Imām al-Bayhaqī (10/23). So Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) differentiated between the permissibility of al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) for the man to look at the woman for marriage, and using it as a proof by the verse in the Qur’ān, and the statement of ‘Abdullāh Ibn Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), and between showing her face & hands, so he prohibited that except to the Mahrams, so there's a difference for Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) between ‘Awrat al-Nadhr where it’s permissible to show the face & hands for a necessary need, and between ‘Awrat al-Satr where it's not permissible whatsoever, and the woman's covering of her face in the presence of non-Mahram men according to the Majority of the Scholars is not because it's a ‘Awrah in & within itself.

What’s necessary to pay attention too is that the Fuqahā’ differentiate between the ‘Awrah of the free woman and the ‘Awrah of a slave woman, and most of the

statements of the Fuqahā' in buying, selling & dealings in the shops & necessary times to look at a woman relate to the slave women who used to go out much more than the free women, so unfortunately these days people have taken the statements of the Fuqahā' regarding the slave women and the rulings that deal with them & applied it to the free women.

Okay, now we can go through the opinions of the 4 Imāms in further detail: As for Imām Mālik (رحمه الله): He views that the face & hands are to be covered in respect of the onlookers, not because it's an 'Awrah within itself. And this is what his companions affirm from him, so he orders the Muslimah to cover her face in the presence of men, and permits showing the face when there are no men around. Imām Ibn Qattān (رحمه الله) said: {And what most likely appears to me is to say: The Madhab of Mālik is that it's not permissible for a man to look at a non-Mahram woman except in necessity...and the permissibility of displaying [the face], and its prohibition [of displayment] is of different levels according to him - i.e.: Mālik - upon the permissibility of looking, or its prohibition, so in every situation that he has permitted looking, there's a concession for displaying [the face]". Refer to "Al-Nadhr Fī Ahkām al-Nadhr" (page 50-51).

And this is exactly what Imām Abū al-'Abbās al-Winshirīsī al-Mālikī (رحمه الله) says in "Al-Mi'yār al-Mu'rib": {The 'Awrah of Salāh, and the 'Awrah where it's permissible to look at her, are two different types.} then he said: {All of this indicates that the 'Awrah with regards to looking has a specific ruling, and there's another ruling related to Salāh, this alludes to the command of covering the face for the young woman: That if she prays with her Niqāb on, she doesn't have to repeat the Salāh}. Refer to "Al-Mi'yār al-Mu'rib" (1/310).

Some people also get confused that Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) permits a woman to eat with a non-Mahram male. Refer to al-Muwattā' (2/934).

Now what he intends by this are certain situations where there are no prohibitions involved, and the female Arabs eat with their slaves, and they eat from beneath their Jilbāb, and this is well-known, in fact Imām al-Azharī (رحمه الله) explained the saying of Imām Mālik (رحمه الله), so he said: {The meaning of Mālik's statement relating to dining, that is when she has a Hijāl [i.e. full tent covering upon her]}. Refer to "Ikmal al-'Ulūm" by al-Qādī 'Iyādh (6/520).

Al-Hijāl is the plural of "Hajalah", and it's a house like a dome which covers like clothes. [Similarity to the covering of this elderly woman] Refer to "Al-Nihāyah Fī Gharīb al-Hadīth wal-Athar" (1/346). So, he considered the woman eating in the presence of a non-Mahram, completely covered, not just her face.

And it's permissible according to Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) for the elderly woman or a free woman with her slave & servant, and this is explicitly the saying of Mālik (رحمه الله), as it was mentioned from him by Imām Ibn al-'Arabī (رحمه الله), he said: {Mālik said: It's permissible for the young boy to eat with his female master, and that is not permissible for mature men} Refer to "Ahkām al-Qur'ān" (3/386) {Al-'Ilmiyyāh}).

Imām Ibn 'Abdīl Barr (رحمه الله) said: {A permit has been reported relating to a woman eating with her young slave [hasn't reached maturity], and with her trustworthy servant [i.e., No fitnah]}. [Refer to "Al-Kāfī Fī Fiqh Ahlāl Madīnah" (2/1136)].

Also, it's mentioned in al-Muwattā' from Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) that he prohibits a man to send greetings [Salāms] to a young woman. [Refer to al-Muwattā' (2/959)].

So how is it possible that Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) would prohibit a man giving Salāms to a non-Mahram woman, and at the same time, allow him to eat with her?! Rather, he intends the elderly women as it was clarified by Ibn al-Jahm (رحمه الله), and Mālik (رحمه الله) has explicitly made clear by his statement: {And a young woman is not allowed to remain sitting together with a man, but as for the elderly woman, and the young servant [who hasn't reached maturity] who would not be accused with indecency by sitting with her, and the one that sits with him wouldn't be accused of indecency, then I don't see anything wrong with that}. [Refer to "Mawāhib al-Jalīl" (3/405) and "Al-Bayān wal-Tahsīl" (9/335)].

Moreover, some people get confused about what's mentioned from Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) regarding the issue of al-Dhihār, which is when a man says to his wife "You are to me like the back of my mother", so the husband prohibits himself from his wife.

So, what people got confused about is what's narrated from Mālik (رحمه الله), that the wife her face to her husband who has prohibited himself from her, and Mālik (رحمه الله) said: "And others can also look at her face". [Refer to "al-Mudawanah" (2/335)].

What Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) meant by "And others can also look at her face" is that she can show her face to him, because he's her husband, even if he prohibited himself from her, and the face can be seen by others who are further from him, so the husband is not the only one that can look at her face, and it's not 'Awrat al-Satr [Face isn't 'Awrah in & of itself], but rather it's 'Awrat al-Nadhr [Face is a

‘Awrah in the presence of strange Men], so others can see her such as her slave & Mahrams, and they are many, in fact some of the Salaf gave a concession for the owned slave to see the hair of his female master.

Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) narrated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) that he said: “There’s no problem for the slave to look at his female master’s hair”. Narrated by Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (رحمه الله) in his Musannāf (17557).

And the husband is given preference than the others, even if he has forbidden his wife for himself, and this is what Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) meant, and Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) emphasises his strictness when it comes to looking at an engaged woman, and that he cannot see more than the face & hands. And he was asked about the slave woman that was purchased: Do you think it's okay to look at her hands? Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) said: “I hope that there will be no problem in that”. [Refer to “Al-Bayān wal-Tahsīl” (7/296)].

And whoever knows the Madhab of Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) regarding the different types of ‘Awrah & Nadhr [looking at a woman], for the slave & free women, and the urgent & necessary moments, he would know that he doesn’t intend what is attributed to him from some of the ignorant people who say that he allows a woman to travel in front of men in all situations.

And they narrate some of Imām Mālik’s words regarding men who perform Tayammūm for the dead woman that is buried in the ground. [Refer to “Al-Mudawanah” (1/261)].

And they considered this a consequence/necessity for showing the body parts of the person who the Tayammūm is being done for, whereas Tayammūm can be done on a woman without showing [her body parts] or touching her.

And that is because Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) is of the view that if a woman dies, and she has no one except her son with her: That he washes her with her clothes on. Refer to “Al-Nawādir wal-Ziyādāt” (1/551-552) & “Al-Bayān wal-Tahsīl” (2/247) And this is her son, and she is dead, and having the water reach the body parts is harder than dirt reaching the body parts, so the author did not intend for it to reach the body to begin with.

And holding Mālik’s words in the issue of al-Nadhr to justify showing the face for a woman, is a mistake which is fallen into by those who haven’t completely grasped/understood his Madhab regarding the differentiation between the two types of ‘Awrah.

And the Mālikiyyah differentiate between ‘Awrat al-Nadhr and ‘Awrat al-Satr, and among them are those who refer to ‘Awrat al-Nadhr and fitnah, so he would consider a woman in her entirety a ‘Awrah from this point of view.

Imām al-Qurtubī (رحمه الله) said: “And what the Principles of the Sharī’ah have implied is that all of a woman is a ‘Awrah, her body & her voice, as it has been previously stated, so it’s not permissible to reveal that except for a necessary need, such as a testimony against her, or medical treatment, or being asked a question to display & confirm her identity”. [Refer to “Al-Jāmi’ li-Ahkām al-Qur’ān” (17/208)].

Note: As for the voice being a ‘Awrah, this has no proof as mentioned by Shaykh Sulaymān al-‘Alwān (حفظه الله), rather it is said that her voice is fitnah.

As for Imām Abū Hanifah (رحمه الله): Then he is like Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) in this topic, he differentiates between ‘Awrat al-Satr & ‘Awrat al-Nadhr, so he doesn't obligate covering the face & hands because they are ‘Awrah [in & of itself], but he rather obligates covering them in the presence of Men who must be covered from, and I have seen those who use a statement of Abī Hanifah (رحمه الله) as proof in a context where the rulings are dealing with “Nadhr”. [Necessary situations where a man can see a woman’s face].

It was mentioned by Muhammad Ibn al-Hassan (رحمه الله) as it is stated in “Al-Mabsūt” where he said: {And it’s completely fine to look at her face & hands, and not to look at anything else from her, and this is the statement of Abī Hanīfah}. [Refer to “al-Mabsūt” by Muhammad Ibn al-Hassan al-Shaybānī (3/49-50)].

So when the person who quoted such words mixed it up with the principle, and it is not differentiating between the two types of 'Awrah & both contexts, they attribute towards the Madhab of Imām Abī Hanīfah (رحمه الله) what he doesn't intend, and the most knowledge scholars among the Hanafīyyah know what he means and they can see the differentiation, and they make it clear that covering the face is the principle, and that the permissibility times a man can look at her doesn't contradict the principle of covering for the woman, because the speech to a man is different than the speech to a woman.

Imām al-Sarakhsī (رحمه الله) said: "The woman is an ‘Awrah, from the absolute peak of her head to the bottom of her feet, thereafter it’s permissible to look at some of the areas from her, when it’s essential and a necessity”. Refer to “al-Mabsūt” by Imām al-Sarakhsī (10/145) - And what he is referring to here is ‘Awrat al-Nadhr.

And that's why, you will not find among the Muhaqiqīn of the Hanafī's who permit a woman to show her face except in a context where there's a necessary need for looking at her in the contracts and protecting rights, and they differentiate between the principle of looking, and between the necessity for it, and they differentiate between 'Awrat al-Satr & 'Awrat al-Nadhr.

Imām al-Tahtāwī (رحمه الله) said in his "Hāshiyah": {Abū Hanīfah's statement: "And all of the body of a free women" meaning: her body, Abū Hanīfah's statement: "Except her face", and prohibiting the young woman from showing it is in fear of fitnah/temptation, not because it's 'Awrah}. Refer to "Hāshiyat al-Tahtāwī 'ala Marāqī al-Fallāh" (page 241).

And this is what is affirmed by the Hanafī Scholars and its Muhaqiq's [The revisers among the Hanafī Madhab], such as al-Jasās (رحمه الله), Ibn 'Ābidīn (رحمه الله), and other than them. Refer to "Ahkām al-Qur'ān" (5/172-173 & 245) for the statement of al-Jassās (رحمه الله). And refer to "Rad al-Muhtār" (2/79) for the statement of Ibn 'Ābidīn (رحمه الله). And as for Imām al-Shāfi'ī (رحمه الله): There's no disagreement from his statement regarding the obligation of covering a woman's face, because of Nadhr [Onlookers from non-Mahram men], just like the saying of Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) & Imām Abū Hanīfah (رحمه الله).

And what Imām al-Muzanī (رحمه الله) quoted from him regarding the Tafsīr of the Apparent Adornments: "That it's the Face & Hands". [Refer to "Mukhtasar al-Muzanī" (page 163)].

And what he intends is 'Awrat al-Nadhr, and he mentioned it in the context of 'Awrat al-Salāh; and that is why Imām al-Bayhaqī (رحمه الله) held the Tafsīr of that upon displaying the face and hands for the Mahrams to look at, not for the strangers to look at, as it's mentioned in "al-Sunan al-Kubrā". Refer to "al-Sunan al-Kubrā" (7/85 & 94), and this was explained the exact same way by Imām al-Khatīb al-Shirbīnī al-Subkī (رحمه الله), Imām ibn al-Rifāh (رحمه الله) & others. And the Imām of the Haramayn al-Juwaynī (رحمه الله): "The Muslims agreed upon preventing the women from going out showing their faces, because looking [at the face] is the centre of temptation". [Refer to "Nihāyat al-Matlab" (12/31)].

Imām Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī (رحمه الله) said when he mentioned the temptation/fitnah of looking between men & women in al-Ihyā': "The men have still remained throughout the centuries showing their faces, and the women going out wearing the Niqāb". [Refer to "Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn" (2/47)].

And Imām Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī (رحمه الله) in “al-Ihyā” considered showing the face a sin. Refer to “Ihyām ‘Ulūm al-Dīn” (2/313).

And Imām al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) in his book “al-Rawdah” has supported the consensus that was mentioned by al-Juwaynī (رحمه الله). [Refer to “Rawdat al-Tālibīn” (5/366-367)].

Imām al-Shihāb al-Ramlī (رحمه الله) said: “[He [Imām al-Nawawī] mentioned in “al-Rawdah” and the origins of this consensus/agreement and he approved of it.” [Refer to “Hāshiyat al-Ramlī ‘ala Asna al-Matālib” (3/109) and refer to “Fatāwa al-Ramlī” (3/170)].

And Imām Abū al-‘Abbās Ibn al-Rif’ah (رحمه الله) has stated the obligation of covering a woman's face in Salāh, if men pass by, and Imām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) quoted from Ibn al-Rif’ah (رحمه الله): “I saw a Shaykh deeply follow & examine the subsidiary issues of the Shāfi’ī Madhab by his beard”. [Refer to “al-Durar al-Kāminah” (3/170)].

Imām al-Subkī (رحمه الله) said: {What’s closest to the view of our companions [i.e. Shāfi’ī Madhab]: Is that the Face & Hands is a ‘Awrah in al-Nadhr [of being looked at from non-Mahram men], not in Salāh}. It was quoted from him by Imām al-Khatīb al-Shirbīnī (رحمه الله) in “Mughnī al-Muhtāj” (4/209).

And the Fuqahā’ of the Shāfi’iyyāh differentiate between ‘Awrat al-Salāh and ‘Awrat al-Satr and ‘Awrat al-Nadhr, and the most common mistaken that occurs from people is quoting a statement from them in a specific situation, and applying it upon another situation.

Imām Ibn Hajr al-Haytamī (رحمه الله) said: “[And if a stranger is found looking at her, she is compelled to cover her face from him, or else she would be assisting him upon Harām, and would be sinful for that”. Refer to “Tuhfat al-Muhtāj, Fī Sharh al-Minhāj” (7/193).

Imām al-Ramlī (رحمه الله) said in “Nihāyat al-Muhtāj”: {And among those who has given exception to the face & hands is the author, al-Nawawī in his “Majmū”, however he has obligated it upon the free woman, and the obligation of covering it in this world is not because it's a ‘Awrah in & of itself, rather it's because of her being looked at [from men] which causes fitnah most of the time}. [Refer to Nihāyat al-Muhtāj (2/457)].

And the Imāms of Fatwā and Revisers among the Shāfi'īyyāh approve of the obligation of covering a woman's face, even though the reason behind covering the face is differed upon, so a group of Scholars mandate covering [the face] in & of itself, such as al-Shihāb al-Ramlī (رحمه الله), al-Shams al-Ramlī (رحمه الله), al-Khatīb al-Shirbīnī (رحمه الله), and some of them mandate it for the Maslahah [Benefit] of the people and repelling fitnah & corruption, such as Abī Zakariyyāh al-Ansārī (رحمه الله) and al-Shihāb Ibn Hajr (رحمه الله).

And the “Mu'tamad” [i.e. Official] opinion among the Shāfi'īyyāh: Is what Imām al-Rāfi'ī (رحمه الله) & Imām al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) agreed upon, that a woman's covering of her face is obligatory in & of itself, as quoted from them by Imām al-Khatīb (رحمه الله), then what Imām al-Haytamī (رحمه الله) & al-Ramlī (رحمه الله) are upon, and it is what's mentioned in this issue without any disagreement that a woman is obliged to cover her face in the presence of the sight of men.

And Imām al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) has prevented a Muslimah to show her face & hands in the presence of a disbelieving woman, except if she was a slave of hers. And he [Imām al-Nawawī] said: {This is what's correct in the Madhab of al-Shāfi'ī}, as it has been quoted from Imām al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) by his student Ibn al-'Attār (رحمه الله) in “al-Fatāwa”. Refer to “Fatāwa al-Imām al-Nawawī” (page 180).

And Imām al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) said in “al-Minhāj”: {And it's forbidden for a grown up mature man to look at the 'Awrah of a mature free non-Mahram woman, and that's including her face and hands, at the times of fear of fitnah, and also at the times where there's no fitnah, according to the correct view}. Refer to “Minhāj al-Tālibīn” (page 204).

And some of them quote a statement by al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) in “al-Minhāj” wherein he quoted from al-Qādhī 'Iyādh (رحمه الله): {That the woman's covering of her face is a recommended Sunnah}. Refer to the words of al-Qādhī 'Iyādh (رحمه الله) in “Ikmal al-Mu'allim” (7/37), and the statement of al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) is found in “Sharh Sahih Muslim” (14/139).

So these people claim that Imām al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) approves of this statement of al-Qādhī 'Iyādh, and this is a mistake on their behalf, verily Imām al-Nawawī (رحمه الله) emphasises his strictness regarding a Muslimah showing her face to a disbelieving woman, and he obligates covering up in her presence, because she is not from “their women”, as it's mentioned in the Verse of Adornments & what's after it, so if he prohibits a woman to show her face & hands to a disbelieving woman, than what about the non-Mahram men?!

And the statement of al-Qādhī ‘Iyādh (رحمه الله) was weakened by a group of Scholars from the Imāms of the Shāfi’iyyāh, such as al-Khatīb al-Shirbīnī (رحمه الله), al-Shams al-Ramlī (رحمه الله), Ibn Hajr al-Haytamī (رحمه الله) and others. Refer to “Mughnī al-Muhtāj” (3/209) for the statement of al-Khatīb al-Shirbīnī (رحمه الله). Refer to “Nihāyat al-Muhtāj” (6/188) for the statement of al-Shams al-Ramlī (رحمه الله). And refer to “Tuhfat al-Muhtāj” for the statement of Ibn Hajr al-Haytamī (رحمه الله).

And the Fuqahā’ of the Shāfi’iyyāh know what Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) intends and his differentiation between ‘Awrat al-Nadhr and ‘Awrat al-Satr, so they do not attribute to Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) the permissibility for a woman to show her face, except in the contexts of ‘Awrat al-Salāh & ‘Awrat al-Satr, but rather they attribute towards Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) the obligation of her covering of the face in the context of ‘Awrat al-Nadhr, i.e. In the presence of male onlookers. Imām al-Shihāb (رحمه الله) said: {And the Madhab of al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله) as it’s stated in “al-Rawdah” and other than it: Is that all of a woman's body is ‘Awrah, even the face & hands in all cases, and it's said: It’s permissible to look at her face & hands if there is no fear [of fitnah], and upon the first saying: They are both ‘Awrah except in Salāh, so the prayer is not nullified by showing them [the face & hands].} Refer to “Hāshiyat al-Shihāb ‘ala Tafsīr al-Baydāwī” (6/372).

And what is attributed towards Imām al-Shāfi’ī (رحمه الله), Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) and Imām Abū Hanīfah (رحمه الله): That they permit a woman to show her face in the presence of men who are not permitted to look at her, and not lower their gaze from her, is a widespread mistake among the later scholars, and they are not able to explicitly establish that from them, and the reason for this is not paying close attention & reading their statements in ‘Awrat al-Satr and ‘Awrat al-Nadhr, and differentiating between the two.

And as for Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (رحمه الله): The textual evidence from him is numerous, and he obliges a woman to cover her face, as a ‘Awrah which a free woman covers in & of itself, even if there was no fitnah.

Imām Ahmad (رحمه الله) said: {Everything from a woman is a ‘Awrah, even her fingernail, and he said: And the fingernail of a woman is a ‘Awrah, and if she goes out, she cannot show anything, not her hand or fingernail or leather socks, since the leather socks describe the [shape] of the feet}. This was quoted from him by Imām al-Khallāl (رحمه الله) in “Ahkām al-Nisā’ ‘an al-Imām Ahmad” (Page 31-33).

After Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) spoke about the woman showing her adornment to her husband & Mahrams & how she must veil herself in Salāh even if she is alone at home as that is the right of Allāh, so he said:

And as opposed to that: The face, the hands and the feet, she is not permitted to reveal that to the strangers (i.e., non-Mahrams) according to the most correct of the 2 opinions, unlike how it was before it was abrogated (before the Āyāh of Hijāb came down), rather she doesn't reveal anything except her clothes. And as for covering that in the Salāh, it's not obliged according to the agreement of the Muslims, rather it's lawful for her to show both of them (face & hands) in the Salāh according to the majority of the scholars, like Abū Hanīfah (رحمه الله), al-Shāfi'ī (رحمه الله) & other than them, and it is one of the 2 narrations from Ahmad (رحمه الله).

Likewise it's permissible to show the feet according to Abū Hanīfah (رحمه الله), and it's the stronger view, as 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) considered it to be from the apparent adornments, she said "And to not reveal their adornments except what appears from her" [Al-Nūr:31], she said: "al-Fatkḥ" a silver ring that is in the toes of the feet, this is narrated by Ibn Abī Hātim. So, this is an evidence that the women used to show their feet first of all, as they would show their face and hands, they would loosen the end of their feet (to relax), so if she walked, her feet would show, and they wouldn't walk in leather shoes or closed shoes and covering this in Salāh has severe difficulty. And Umm Salamāh (رضي الله عنها) said: "A woman prays in a coloured thobe, it covers the top of her feet, and when she prostrates, the bottom of her feet might show".

"And in general, it has been proven through the text (Qur'ān & Sunnah) and Ijmā' that it's not required for her to wear a Jilbāb in Salāh that covers her if she was at home, but rather that's if she left the house. Therefore, she would pray in her home, even if her face, hands & feet would show, as they used to walk in the beginning before the command of drawing the Jilbāb upon themselves, so the 'Awrah in Salāh is not aligned with the 'Awrah of looking, without issuance nor contradictions/opposements." [Refer to Majmū' al-Fatāwa (21/115)].

So just to conclude, it's important to place the sayings of the Imāms of the Madhabs where they belong & not take their quotes out of context, so all 4 Imāms believe it's obligation for a woman to cover her face in the presence of men, but the reason why it's obligatory is what they differed over, whether the face is considered 'Awrah in & of itself as is the Madhab of Imām Ahmad (رحمه الله) or that the face is 'Awrah in respect to the onlookers of stranger men as is the opinion of the other 3 Imāms.

This is what Shaykh ‘Abdūl ‘Azīz al-Turayfī (حفظه الله) is upon, likewise Shaykh Sulaymān Ibn Nāsir al-‘Alwān (حفظه الله), Shaykh ‘Alī al-Khudayr (حفظه الله), Shaykh Nāsir al-Fahad (حفظه الله), Shaykh Ahmad Jibrīl (حفظه الله) and many others. Shaykh Sulaymān al-‘Alwān (حفظه الله) said: “The 4 Imāms are in agreement regarding the obligation of covering a woman’s face, and those who view that it’s permissible to show the face are men from the Imāms of the Shāfi’ī Madhab, not Imām al-Shāfi’ī.”

PART THREE: NIQĀB BY THE MUFASSIRĪN –**TAFSĪR OF SŪRAT AL-AHZĀB, ĀYĀH 59:**

Written by Abū Bakr at-Tarābulṣī.

1. The interpreter of the Qur’ān, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said about the verse: {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves their Jalābīb (garments)}: “Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) ordered the believing women if they left their houses for a need to cover their faces from above their heads with their cloaks and to show one eye” [Al-Tabarī (19/181)]. More to come soon (from Al-Tabarī).

2. The Mufasssir, Yahyā Ibn Salām al-Aymi al-Basbri al-Qayrawanī (رحمه الله): [Died 200AH] said about the tafsir of Allāh’s statement: {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves of their Jilbāb (garments). That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allāh Forgiving and Merciful.} He (رحمه الله) said: “And the Jilbāb: is the loose outer garment that’s used to cover (her body with), and to(also) cover the right part of her face, her right eye and her nose”.

3. The Imām of the Mufasssirīn al-Imām Abū Ja’far al-Tabarī (رحمه الله): [Died 310AH] said in his tafsīr of the words of Allāh: {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves of their Jilbāb (garments). That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allāh Forgiving and Merciful.}.

He (رحمه الله) said: “Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) says to remind his Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم): {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women} to not imitate the slave women in their dress code if they leave their houses for their needs, so that they reveal their hair and faces, but rather to bring down over themselves of their garments, lest they get afflicted by a fāsiq if he knew that they were free women from harmful words.

Furthermore, the people of interpretation have differed on the description of the covering that Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) ordered, so some have said that it’s to cover their faces and heads, and not to reveal from them except one eye. He mentioned who said this: ‘Alī narrated to me who narrated from Abū Sālih who narrated from Mu’awiyah from ‘Alī from Ibn ‘Abbās about the verse {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves of

their garments} “Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) ordered the believing women if they left their houses for a need to cover their faces from above their heads with their cloaks and to leave one eye”. Ya’qūb narrated to me who narrated from Ibn ‘Ulyā from Ibn ‘Awn from Muhammad from ‘Ubaydah (رحمه الله) about the verse: {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves of their garments} “so Ibn ‘Awn demonstrated in front of us, he said: and it was worn by Muhammad.

Muhammad said: and ‘Ubaydah wore it in front of us. He said Ibn ‘Awn demonstrated, so he covered his nose, and his left eye, and left his right eye (to see), and lowered his garment from the top until it was near his eyebrows or on the eyebrow”. Ya’qūb narrated to me who narrated from Hushaym who was informed by Hisham from Ibn Sirīn (رحمه الله) who said: I asked ‘Ubaydah (رحمه الله) about the verse {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves of their garments.}: So he demonstrated by his clothes, so he covered his head, and his face, and he placed his clothes over one of his eyes” And others said: “Rather they(the women) were ordered to tighten their garments over their foreheads” End Quote...He afterwards mentioned who said this. [Jām’i al-Bayān fi Tafsīr al-Qur’ān (19/180-182)].

4. The Mufasssir al-‘Allāmah, Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Alī al-Rāzī (رحمه الله): [Died 370AH] He said about the tafsir of the verse {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves of their Jilbāb (garments).} He mentioned some of the previous narrations from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) and Umm Salamāh (رضي الله عنها) and ‘Ubaydah (رحمه الله) and al-Hassan (رحمه الله) and afterwards said: Abū Bakr (رحمه الله) said:

“There is proof from this verse that the mature woman is ordered to cover her face from the strangers and revealing what’s covered from her chastity while she goes out, might tempt the people of suspicion about them (the women), and this is proof that the slave women is not supposed to cover her face and hair because of Allāh’s statement “And the believing women” is apparent that he intended the free women, and it’s also narrated in the tafsir, lest they become like the slave women, who are not ordered to cover the head and the face, so he ordered the covering (of Hijāb) to differentiate the free women from the slave women” End quote [Ahkām al-Qur’ān (5/244-245)].

5. The Mufasssir al-Imām Abū al-Muthafar al-Sam’ani (رحمه الله) [died 489AH]: He said: “And the statement of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى): {bring down over themselves of their Jilbāb (garments)} Yes (meaning): To cover herself with the Jilbāb, and the

Jilbāb is the loose outer garment, and it is the sheet that the woman covers with over her torso (chest) and Khimār (veil). ‘Ubaydat al-Salmānī (رحمه الله) said: The woman covers up with her Jilbāb, so that she covers her head and her face and all of her body except one eye” End Quote [Tafsīr al-Qur’ān (4/306-307)].

6. The Mufasssir, the Jurist ‘Emad al-Dīn al-Tabarī (رحمه الله) [Died 504AH]: He said: {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves of their Jilbab(garments)} “The Jilbab: it is the loose outer garment, so he ordered them to cover their faces and their heads and he didn’t command the slave women to do that” End Quote [Ahkām al-Qur’ān (4/354)].

7. The Mufasssir al-Imām al-Baghāwī (رحمه الله) [Died 516AH]: He said: { O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves of their Jalābīb (garments)} “The plural of Jilbāb, it is the sheet that the woman covers with over her torso (chest) and Khimār (veil), and ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) and Abu ‘Ubaydah (رضي الله عنه) said: The believing women were ordered to cover their heads and their faces with the Jilbāb, except one eye to know that they are free women {That is more suitable that they will be known} that they are free women {and not be abused} so they aren’t exposed to being subjected.” End quote [Tafsīr al-Baghāwī (3/586)].

8. The Mufasssir al-‘Allāmah Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arābi al-Mālikī (رحمه الله) [Died 543AH]:

“The people differed over the Jilbāb based upon similar wordings for its purpose: That it’s the clothing that covers the body, however they divided it here to be said: That it’s the loose outer garment, and it’s said: That it’s the face covering. Allāh’s saying {to bring down over themselves} it’s said: It means to cover her head over her Khimār (veil).

And it’s said: To cover her face until nothing is shown except one eye. And what made them categorize it, is that they saw the covering and the Hijāb in which was previously firmly established in its meaning, and this addition came on top of it and has been associated with the evidence that comes after it(covering the face is from the understanding of the Sahābah & Salaf), which makes it clearer and it’s the saying of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) {That is more suitable that they will be known} and what’s apparent: is that this deprives the meaning of covering a lot, so it’s proven that he meant to differentiate them from the slave women who walk around uncovered or with a single veil who are subjected to by the men, so they uncover them and talk to them, so if she wore a Jilbāb and covered herself, that

would be a protection between her and between the subjector of (bad) words and the one who relies on inflicting harm” End Quote [Ahkām al-Qur’ān (3/1586)].

9. The Mufassir al-‘Allāmah Ibn ‘Attiyyah al-Andalusī (رحمه الله) [Died 546AH]: He said about the tafsīr of Allāh’s saying: {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves their Jilbāb (garments). That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.}. He said: “When the customs of the Arab women was despised & degraded in the meaning of their Hijāb (covering), and they used to reveal their faces just like the slave women do, and that used to be an invitation for the men to glance at them and to diverge them to thinking about them, Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) ordered his Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to order them to bring down over themselves their Jilbāb so that they can be covered and to clearly differentiate between the free women and the slave women.

So the free women are known to be covered, to prevent being subjected from those flirts or young men and it’s narrated that there was in Madīnah a group of people who would sit on the mounts to look at the women and subjecting them and propositioning them, so the verse was revealed about that, and the Jilbāb: (is) A cloth bigger than the veil, and it’s narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn Mas’ūd that it is the outer loose garment and the people differed over its picture of covering, so Ibn ‘Abbās and ‘Ubaydah al-Salmānī said that is what a woman wears until nothing is shown from her except one eye to see.

Ibn ‘Abbās and Abū Qatādah also said and that is to be worn over the forehead and to tighten it, then curve it around the nose, so that her eye is shown, however she covers the chest and the majority of the face and Allāh’s saying {That’s more suitable that they will be known} yes, being totally different, so that they don’t get mixed up with the slave women, so if she is known, she won’t be subjected to harm from the opposition who will see her as a noble free woman and (this verse “more suitable to be known”) it doesn’t mean to know who the identity of the woman actually is, and whenever ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to see a slave woman who covered her head, he would hit her with a stick to uncover her head to preserve the dress code of the free women, and the rest of the verse is aspiration and gentleness and incitement (urge) for Tawbah (repentance) and having hope in the mercy of Allāh”. End Quote [Al-Muharrar al-Wajīz fi Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-‘Azīz (13/99-100)].

10. The Mufassir al-Hāfidh Abū Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī (رحمه الله) [Died 597AH] He said about the verse of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) { O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves their

Jilbāb (garments).}: “The cause for its revelation was because the evil sinners used to harm the women if they went out at night, so if they saw a woman that has a head covering, they would leave her and said she’s a free woman, and if they saw her without a head covering, they said she is a slave woman, so they harmed her, so this verse was revealed, Al-Sūdī said, and the statement of Allāh: { to bring down over themselves their Jilbāb (garments).} Ibn Qutaybah said: They wear the robe, and others said: They cover their heads and their faces, to know that they are free women. {That’s more suitable} Yes, more appropriate and closer {That they be known} that they are free women {So they aren’t harmed}...” End Quote [Zād al-Masīr (6/422)].

11. The Mufasssīr al-‘Allāmah al-Mufasssīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī (رحمه الله) [Died 606AH] He said about the verse of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى): {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves their Jilbāb (garments).} He said: “In the days of ignorance, the free women and slave women used to go out uncovered, exposing their adornments, so accusations fell (upon them), so Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) ordered the free women to cover up and his saying { That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused} It’s said: To be known that they are free women, so they aren’t exposed, and it could also be said: The meaning: To be known that they don’t show off their adornments, because whoever covers her face without (believing) it being a ‘Awrah, it won’t come to her mind that she is revealing her ‘Awrah (“the adornments” because the Niqab is covering it), so she will be known to be covered(covering her adornments by the Niqāb).” End Quote [Tafsīr al-Kabīr (25/230)].

12. Al-Mufasssīr al-Imām al-Khāzan (رحمه الله) [Died 741] He said: {O Prophet say to your wives and your daughters and the believing women to lower} meaning to lower and cover {upon them with their Jalābīb} the plural of Jilbāb, it is the sheet that the woman covers with over her torso (chest) and Khimār, and it’s said that it is the sheet, and everything that is used to cover with from a cloak or other than it. Ibn ‘Abbās said: “The believing women were ordered to cover their heads and faces with the Jilbāb except one eye, to know that they are free women and it’s the saying of Allāh (جل وعلا) {That is more suitable that they be known and won’t be harmed} meaning that they don’t get subjected.” End Quote [Tafsīr al-Khāzan (3/478)].

13. The Mufasssīr al-Imām al-‘Izz Ibn ‘Abdul Salām (رحمه الله) [Died 660AH] He said: “[Al-Jalābīb] The Jilbāb: is the outer loose garment or the veil or every cloth that a woman wears above her clothes and lowering it to include her head and to put it above the Khimār until no opening is seen from her neck or to cover her face until nothing is shown except her left eye {To be known} from the slaves

with the free women or from the Mutabarijjāt (those who go out uncovered) with the covered up women. Qatādah said: If the slave woman passed by, the hypocrites used to afflict harm on her, so Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) prevented the free women to imitate them”. End quote [Tafsīr al-‘Izz Ibn ‘Abdul Salām (2/590)].

14. The great Mufasssir, Al-Imām al-Qurtubī (رحمه الله) [Died 671AH] He said: {O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to bring down over themselves their Jilbab (garments).} “When the customs of the Arab women were despicable and they used to show their faces just like the slave women and that was an invitation for the men to look at them and to diverge them into thinking about them, Allāh (جل وعلا) ordered his Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to command the lowering of the Jilbāb upon them if they wanted to leave (their houses) for their needs and they used to disappear in the desert before they used to cover up.

So there would be a difference between them and the slave women, so the free women would be known by covering, to resist from subjectors who was a flirt or a young man and the woman was from the believing women before this verse was sent down, they used to go for their needs and would be subjected by some of the evil doers who thought she was a slave woman, so she yells at him so he goes away, so they asked about that to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the verse was revealed for that reason, and al-Hassan and others have said the meaning of.

Thirdly the statement of Allāh {their Jilbābs} The Jalabīb is the plural of Jilbāb and it is the cloth which is bigger than the Khimar, and it’s narrated on Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn Mas’ūd that it’s the outer loose garment and it’s said that it’s the face covering, and what’s most correct is that it’s the garment that covers all of the body (including the face)”. End Quote [Tafsīr al-Qurtubī (14/243)]

I ask Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) that he makes this a beneficial read for whoever reads it and Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) knows best.